

THE DAILY HERALD

Salt Lake City, - - Utah.

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WAS IT A BAD GUESS?

It begins to look very much as if the zeal of the officials in the matter of trying to punish polygamists had overreached itself. The indications are that they went ahead without being sure they were right, and if this supposition should prove true, the position in which they will find themselves will be anything but creditable to honorable officials charged with the duty of enforcing the laws. Should it turn out that the lady who has been made so unpleasantly prominent during the past few days is the victim of the malice or jealousy of some depraved wretch, and that the officers have willingly loaned themselves and their offices to scandalize an innocent woman, what respect can they have for themselves? They will hardly have the impudence to expect decent men and women to respect them. We do not assert that the officials have, in this case, permitted their malice to run away with their judgment; of course it is not known what the investigation may develop, nor what foundation the officials had for bringing the prosecution; but we do say that if the accusation is based on malice, and the prosecution has been instituted on no other foundation than the hope of finding something that will establish the truth of the charge, the officials who have been parties to the proceedings should resign their offices and sink out of sight of reputable people. Their commissions do not authorize them to strike out blindly right and left, guessing that possibly they may hit somebody who should be hurt among the many touched; they will find in their defined powers no authority to assail the good name and fame of innocent young women. THE HERALD will offer no opposition to the enforcement of the law by regular and lawful methods, but it will not consent to this reckless, haphazard business of someone guessing somebody else is guilty, of something wrong and then pouncing upon him or her with an experimental or "prospecting" prosecution, the officials reasoning that if "pay dirt" is struck, all well and good, and if not, it's only a Mormon who has been hurt.

Mr. Sperry, the Librarian of Congress, and one of the most reliable statisticians in the country, has compiled the official figures of the votes cast in the November election. The total number of ballots for Presidential electors was 49,040,868, of which Cleveland had 4,919,975, and Blaine 4,845,022, or within 74 votes of 99,000 plurality for Cleveland. The total Democratic vote in the Northern States was 3,194,882, and at the South 1,716,143. It is shown that notwithstanding the rigorous campaign, the stay-at-home vote was larger than at any previous election. In the southern, eastern and western States, the stay-at-home were largely Republicans who were dissatisfied with the ticket; at the south the feeling that the States would certainly be carried by the Democrats kept thousands at home. It is estimated that had the southern Democrats turned out as they would have done had the contest been at all close, Cleveland's plurality would have been fully 250,000.

It is unfortunate for the lamented Mr. Shylock that the court in his day and country was not so learned and reasonable as the Supreme Court of Illinois has just shown itself to be. Recently a railroad company sold some land to a farmer, reserving the right to remove such gravel as it might require. The transaction appeared satisfactory to all parties, but when the company undertook to remove gravel the farmer served notice that gravel only should be taken, the sand, soil, dust and decayed vegetation being left. The case was carried to the Supreme Court which has decided that the right to take gravel implied the right to remove what necessarily went with it. That is the kind of a decision that Shylock needed and he was put to a good deal of loss and trouble by not getting it; however, he has at last been vindicated, which is something in his favor, and should go towards relieving his name from the ugly stigma which has attached to it so long.

ANTIQUATED LEGISLATION.

The Tennessee Legislature is following in the wake of the Idaho solons in the matter of opposing the preaching of Mormon doctrines by statute. A bill has been introduced in the Legislature of the State named making it an offense punishable by fine and imprisonment to teach the doctrine of polygamy. The telegram bringing the information of the matter says the bill will undoubtedly be passed. In all ages and in every country it has been found to be dangerous business for the State to legislate against the expression of opinion, and when that opinion involves a religious belief the danger is increased. Russia, Austria and Germany are conspicuous modern examples of the evil of trying to suppress individual thought and opinion, and all European and Asiatic countries anciently demonstrated how futile were attempts to proscribe doctrines. Great Britain, the wisest and best of all old world nations, was the first to learn by experience how foolish it was to attempt to enforce legislation in this matter, and now throughout that vast empire, a man's opinion is his own, and the nation will protect him in his right to persuade others to believe as he does, in political, social and religious matters. Only with acts does the government assume to deal, and with these only when they are subversive of the rights of individuals or against the peace, good order and welfare of society. The statute and the doctrine of India were suppressed, but the religions of the Brahmins and Buddhists are preached as boldly and freely in that empire as ever.

The Tennessee law-makers may think they can suppress Mormonism by declaring it unlawful to teach polygamy or any or all of its doctrines within the borders of that State, but if they do so think they have not profited by the experience of centuries. The proposed law will tend to help the spread of Mormon doctrines in Tennessee, unless a rule as old as mankind shall be reversed for this occasion. It is not believed that the Mormon elder's teach polygamy in Tennessee or elsewhere outside of Utah. Whether they do or not the way to oppose them is not by proscriptive laws or murderous mobs, for these only tend to strengthen and encourage them by exciting sympathy and inciting inquiry and investigation.

FOREIGN LAND OWNERS.

The protests on the part of the people against permitting foreigners to gobble up the public domain of this country, are likely to result in putting a stop to the dangerous business. It was stated in the House of Representatives on Wednesday that titled foreigners owned 21,000,000 acres of land in the United States, chiefly in the Western States and Territories. These lands are held for stock ranges and grain farms, and the men employed to tend and till them are largely foreigners, men who have no more interest in the country than their employers. The natural tendency of this order of things, is toward a system of landlordism that has always been infamous in the old world and in no sense in harmony with our institutions, customs, thoughts or sentiments. It is dangerous to the peace and permanency of the republic, and what is equally as bad, works a hardship and injustice upon the poor citizens who are uprooted under our laws to this land for homes. If the wealthy men of Europe want soil in America, let them come over here, abandon their titles, and become citizens of the United States; if they will do these things they will be welcomed, if they will not conform they should not be allowed any of the privileges or advantages that the nation has provided for her own people.

SATAN, THE "wicked deceiver," the round dance and various other personages, devices and performances have all been recognized and condemned as potent enemies to religion, and now the New York Christian Advocate comes out with a warning against the roller skate as an implement specially designed for attacking Christianity. It says the innocent little machine is a foe to pure social life, and the determined antagonist of religious effort, and illustrates and emphasizes its declarations by instancing a congregation of twelve young ladies who lost all interest in religion through lying with the wicked destroyer of Christians. The Advocate warns young people, male and female, who intend to be Christians, to avoid the roller skate, but if they do go on them to "go very little."

MATTERS ARE really growing serious for the Mahdi's forces. News comes that the British troops on the way to Khartoum were attacked by 10,000 of El Mahdi's soldiers, and the results are given as follows: British killed and wounded, 63; Arabs killed 800, wounded 800. This is about the way that the English fight in the east, selling one of their men for at least twenty-five of the enemy.

HENRY M. TELLER has been elected a United States Senator from Colorado, and the Centennial State is to be congratulated upon his choice. The entire west, also, has cause to feel pleased by the selection. Mr. Teller is an able, conscientious statesman, and is a true friend to Colorado and the great west.

WILLIAM M. EVARTS, in the Senatorial seat that has been held down since Roscoe Conkling left it by the cranky old fossil, Elbridge G. Lapham, is a wonderful improvement, though not so great as would have been the return of the brilliant Conkling. Evarts ranks among the leading lawyers of the nation, and though he is narrow in his statesmanship at times, New York will not have occasion to blush, as now, every time she thinks of her Senator. After the 4th of March we will probably never hear of the poor old imbecile Lapham, until a brief line announces his departure for another world.

THE BLANKETTES who are falling upon St. John so furiously because of his alleged offer to sell out to them, seem to forget that their committee men negotiated with him and even, as they allege, agreed upon the price. It is quite as immoral and criminal to buy in such cases as it is to sell.

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